

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of exchanging information via an annotation, comprising:

providing an interface allowing a first user to view query results including one or more data objects the first user is authorized to view, select a data object from the query results, and create an annotation with a scope encompassing [[a]] the selected data object, whereby the annotation annotates the selected data object with metadata describing the selected data object; and

providing an interface element allowing the first user to expand the scope of the annotation to encompass one or more data objects the first user is not authorized to view, whereby the annotation annotates the selected data object and the one or more data objects.

2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein providing an interface element allowing the first user to expand the scope of the annotation comprises providing an interface element allowing the user to associate the annotation with a primary key for a row of data containing the selected data object.

3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein providing an interface allowing a first user to view query results and create an annotation with a scope related to the selected data object comprises:

providing an interface allowing the first user to select one or more rows, columns, or cells of the query results; and

providing an interface allowing the first user to create an annotation for the selected one or more rows, columns, or cells.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein:

providing an interface element allowing the first user to expand the scope of the annotation comprises allowing the first user to associate the annotation with a model entity encompassing the selected data object the first user is authorized to view as well as data objects the first user is not authorized to view; and

the method further comprises storing the annotation with a reference to the model entity.

5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

providing an interface allowing a second user to view query results including one or more data objects the first user is not authorized to view that are encompassed by the expanded scope of the annotation; and

providing an indication to the second user, in the interface, an indication of the annotation.

6-19. (Canceled)

20. (Currently Amended) A tangible computer-readable storage medium containing a program for exchanging information via annotations which, when executed by a processor, performs operations comprising:

providing an interface allowing a first user to view query results, select a data object from the query results, and create an annotation with a scope encompassing a selected data object that the first user is authorized to view, whereby the annotation annotates the selected data object with metadata describing the selected data object; and

providing an interface element allowing the first user to expand the scope of the annotation to encompass one or more data objects the first user is not authorized to view, whereby the annotation annotates the selected data object and the one or more data objects.

21. (Previously Presented) The tangible computer-readable storage medium of claim 20, wherein providing an interface element allowing the first user to expand the scope of the annotation comprises providing an interface element allowing the first user to associate the annotation with a primary key for a row of data containing the selected data object.

22. (Previously Presented) The tangible computer-readable storage medium of claim 21, wherein:

providing an interface element allowing the first user to expand the scope of the annotation comprises allowing the first user to associate the annotation with an entity encompassing the selected data object and one or more data objects that the first user is not authorized to view; and

the method further comprises storing the annotation with a reference to the entity.

23. (Previously Presented) The tangible computer-readable storage medium of claim 22, wherein:

allowing the first user to associate the annotation with an entity comprises presenting the first user with one or more entities encompassing the selected data object and one or more data objects that the first user is not authorized to view; and

the method further comprises storing the annotation with a reference to at least one of the one or more entities selected by the user.

24. (Previously Presented) The tangible computer-readable storage medium of claim 20, wherein the selected data object is an instance value of a field encompassed by an entity.

25. (Previously Presented) The tangible computer-readable storage medium of claim 24, wherein the operations further comprise:

displaying second query results to a second user including one or more data objects the first user is not authorized to view which are encompassed by the expanded

scope of the annotation, wherein at least a portion of the second query results are associated with the entity; and

displaying, to the second user, an indication of the annotation.

26. (Previously Presented) The tangible computer-readable storage medium of claim 25, wherein the second query results do not contain the selected data object described by the annotation.

27. (Previously Presented) The tangible computer-readable storage medium of claim 25, wherein the operations further comprise, in response to input from the second user, displaying the annotation to the second user.

28. (Previously Presented) The tangible computer-readable storage medium of claim 27, wherein the operations further comprise displaying, to the second user, the selected data object described by the annotation.

29-38. (Canceled)